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BAT MAN
FIGHT ALL YOU WANT, BATMAN! FOR EVERY DEMON YOU DEFEAT...
...I WILL CONJURE UP TWO MORE!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
7 featuring... The RETURN OF THE DIABOLICAL DR. TZIN-TZIN!
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ALL GOTHAM CITY NEEDED THESE DAYS -- CONSIDERING THE HECTIC WAY THINGS HAVE BEEN GOING -- WAS THE RETURN OF DR. TZIN-TZIN, THE MYSTIC MASTER OF MALICE AND MAYHEM!
BAT MAN
SO, NATURALLY -- OR PERHAPS SUPERNATURALLY? -- IT HAD TO HAPPEN!
WISER, WILIER AND MORE WARPED THAN EVER, HE BRINGS HIS ASTOUNDING POWERS FOR MORTAL -- AND MENTAL -- COMBAT WITH THE CAPED CRUSADER IN...
"IF THERE WERE NO BATMAN... I WOULD HAVE TO INVENT HIM!"
STORY BY: DAVID V. REED
ART BY: ROMEO TANGHALL & FRANK SPRINGER
EDITED BY: JULIUS SCHWARTZ
5-2459

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"IT WAS TIME NOW, BELOW ME THE GREAT SPHINX OF GIZEH LAY VEILED IN DARKNESS... THE COLOSSUS, IN OCCULT RENDEZVOUS WITH THE MIGHTIEST OF SORCERERS!"
"THE MOMENT OF RELEASE--AND THE VITAL FORCE LEAPED FROM ME IN SHAFTS OF RADIANCE TO ENVELOP THE MONOLITH... AND MANIFEST MY MAGIC WILL!"
"THE SUBLIME SPHINX... GUARDIAN OF THE TEMPLE OF KHA-EF-RE, HEWN FROM LIVING ROCK IN THE TIME OF CHEOPS OF THE FOURTH DYNASTY--ROSE SLOWLY IN MIDAIR AND BEGAN TO MOVE TOWARDS THE SEA!"
"GENTLY, I LET IT SINK INTO THE DEEPEST WATERS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN--"
"--THERE TO CONFOUND THE SCHOLARS OF ANOTHER AGE... AND GIVE RISE TO YET ANOTHER FABLE OF ATLANTIS!"

"THEN, WHERE THE EXALTED CENOTAPH HAD STOOD, I CAUSED ANOTHER TO BE PLACED... IN EVERY WAY A DUPLICATE OF THE ORIGINAL -- AND YET, AS I ALONE WOULD EVER KNOW -- A COUNTERFEIT!..."
"AND SO, I HAVE CONCLUDED THE FIRST PART OF MY PREPARATIONS. TOMORROW, IN THE CITY OF GOTHAM, I BEGIN THE SACRED RITES..."
EVERY WORD, DR. TZIN-TZIN!
IS THE RECORD COMPLETE?
NOW ONLY YOU AND I HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT I HAVE DONE...
...AND YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!
YES, EXALTED NALJORPA* -- AND I GLADLY EMBRACE THE HONOR OF MY FATE!
DIE!
*NALJORPA: A WIZARD OF TIBET -- D.V.R.
THEN, FROM THE SPEEDING AIRCRAFT, A BODY IS UNCEREMONIOUSLY COMMITTED TO THE SEA -- AS THE SERENE MASTER RIDS HIMSELF OF ALL HUMAN CONTACT!
UNTIL IT IS TIME TO MEET THE BATMAN -- I AM ALONE WITH MY PHANTOMS!

AT THAT MOMENT...IN FAR OFF GOTHAM CITY... THE OBJECT OF DR. TZIN-TZIN'S EXULTANT THOUGHTS IS IN A PRETTY FAIR STATE OF ELATION HIMSELF--
GAAAHH! THE BATMAN!
--AS THE CAPED CRUSADER-- SCOURGE OF THE UNDERWORLD-- WREAKS VENGEANCE FOR ALL WHO SUFFER FROM CRIME!
CONTINUED ON 5TH PAGE FOLLOWING.

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WONDER WOMAN, YOU MUST HELP ME. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN.

HOW... MR. ASTOR?

HELP ME FIND THE *MALTESE CUP CAKE*...THAT MYSTERIOUS, FABLED, LEGENDARY IDOL-- *I MUST HAVE IT*-- BECAUSE I MUST HAVE IT!!!

ENTER PETULA LORRY, SNIVELING, SHADOWY HENCHWOMAN, AS IF FROM NOWHERE.

PSSST!!! HEY, STRONG LADY... I CAN TELL YOU WHERE THE *ELUSIVE MALTESE CUP CAKE* IS. IT'S RUMORED TO BE IN THE HANDS OF A SHADY MAN IN THE *UH-OH* DISTRICT OF TOWN.

FOLLOW ME... I'LL TAKE YOU THERE.

HMMMM... *UH-OH?*

UH-OH! GREAT *APHRODITE!*

YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE *MALTESE CUP CAKE?*

MY CHARMING LADY OF GRACE AND STRENGTH-- YOU'VE JUST BEEN TRICKED. NOW MEET MY BOSS, THE CORRUPT CINDY BLUESTREET, BETTER KNOWN AS THE FAT LADY. YOU'LL LOVE HER WICKED, SNARLING LAUGH...

YOU WERE LOOKING FOR A SHADY MAN! INSTEAD, YOU FIND A BIG LADY WHO THROWS A BIG SHADOW-- *HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HO-HO-HO*... AND NOW-- YOU'LL PROMISE ME TO GIVE UP THE SEARCH FOR THE *MALTESE CUP CAKE*...?!? OR ELSE...

BUT WHAT'S THIS ON THE SHELF UP HIGH? IT LOOKS LIKE HALF CUP CAKE - HALF MONSTER. COULD IT BE THE CURSED IDOL?

BUT WHY SUCH A FUSS? WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT A STONE CUP CAKE?

HA HE HE HA HA ...THE *MALTESE CUP CAKE* IDOL IS RUMORED TO BE THE ANCIENT FORERUNNER OF THE MODERN CUP CAKE... GREAT HISTORIC VALUE FOR ASTOR... BUT *I'M* INTERESTED IN WHAT IT'S *WORTH!*

OOOOPS... ANOTHER *FALLEN IDOL!!*

CUP CAKES

CUP CAKES

CUP CAKES

GREAT HERA... WHAT A *CRUMBY* IDOL!

THAT'S NOT THE *MALTESE CUP CAKE!!!*

SO WHAT? MY SEARCH HAS FORTUNATELY LED ME TO THE ULTIMATE! *A DELICIOUS HOSTESS® CUP CAKE! SCRUMPTIOUS, MOUTH-WATERING!*

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AND NOW FOR MY SERIOUS WORK-- TO FIND A JAIL BIG ENOUGH TO HOLD THE FAT LADY AND HER EVIL FRIENDS.

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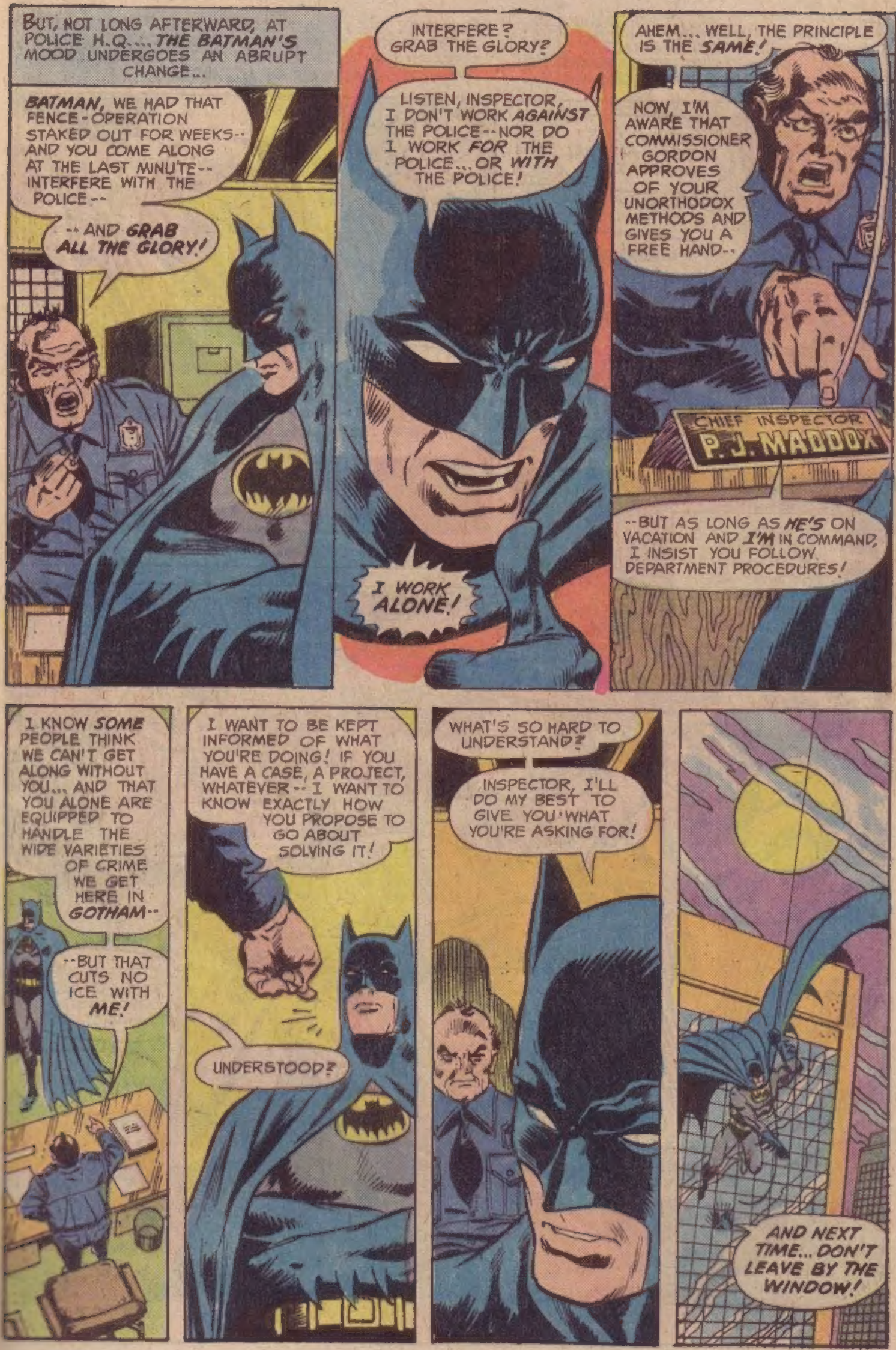
ON SALE NOV. 1

SUPERBOY RETURNS IN SOLO-SUSPENSE!
DC SUPER-STARS #12

ON SALE NOV. 30th

...and NEXT MONTH
WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE WHAT HAPPENS IN
THE SUPERMAN FAMILY and THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY


BUT, NOT LONG AFTERWARD, AT POLICE H.Q.... THE BATMAN'S MOOD UNDERGOES AN ABRUPT CHANGE...
BATMAN, WE HAD THAT FENCE-OPERATION STAKED OUT FOR WEEKS-- AND YOU COME ALONG AT THE LAST MINUTE-- INTERFERE WITH THE POLICE--
--AND GRAB ALL THE GLORY!
INTERFERE? GRAB THE GLORY?
LISTEN, INSPECTOR, I DON'T WORK AGAINST THE POLICE--NOR DO I WORK FOR THE POLICE...OR WITH THE POLICE!
I WORK ALONE!
AHEM... WELL, THE PRINCIPLE IS THE SAME!
NOW, I'M AWARE THAT COMMISSIONER GORDON APPROVES OF YOUR UNORTHODOX METHODS AND GIVES YOU A FREE HAND--
CHIEF INSPECTOR P.J. MADDOX
--BUT AS LONG AS HE'S ON VACATION AND I'M IN COMMAND, I INSIST YOU FOLLOW DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES!
I KNOW SOME PEOPLE THINK WE CAN'T GET ALONG WITHOUT YOU... AND THAT YOU ALONE ARE EQUIPPED TO HANDLE THE WIDE VARIETIES OF CRIME WE GET HERE IN GOTHAM--
--BUT THAT CUTS NO ICE WITH ME!
I WANT TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING! IF YOU HAVE A CASE, A PROJECT, WHATEVER -- I WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU PROPOSE TO GO ABOUT SOLVING IT!
UNDERSTOOD?
WHAT'S SO HARD TO UNDERSTAND?
INSPECTOR, I'LL DO MY BEST TO GIVE YOU WHAT YOU'RE ASKING FOR!
AND NEXT TIME... DON'T LEAVE BY THE WINDOW!

ELSEWHERE IN GOTHAM... JUST BEFORE DAWN... DR. TZIN-TZIN BEGINS THE SACRED TWELVE-HOUR RITES OF ANGKUR IN THE SECRET AERIE OF HIS TSAM KHANG--
NOW MUST I ENVELOP ALL TSAL WITHIN ME!
AND THEN THE SACRED SCARF IS BOUND IN CHARMED TULPA KNOTS... RESERVOIRS OF POWER RADIATING THROUGH HIM TO THE SPIRITS OF ANCIENT DIBCHENS-- THE TEACHERS OF WIZARDS!
I SEEK THE POWER TO HUMBLE THE ONE FOE ON EARTH WHO IS WORTHY OF MY ENMITY-- THE SIDDHA* BATMAN!
TWICE I HAVE FOUGHT HIM AND LOST! THIS TIME I MUST BE READY!
*SIDDHA: A SUPER-NORMAL PERSON-- D.V.R.
ANGKUR!-- THE RITES OF EMPOWERMENT-- ENVOKING THE MOST SECRET OF SECRET PSYCHIC PHENOMENA!...
COME TO ME, TOWOS, EATER OF MEN'S BRAINS!
COME TO ME, THAS YANG, DEMON FIRE-TIGER!
COME TO ME, CHANGCHUB, MYSTIC MASTER OF MAGICIANS!
HELP ME IN MY CONSECRATED TASK!

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SUDDENLY -- ABOVE THE DIN -- A SHRIEK FROM THE CROWD!

THAT CHILD -- SHE'LL BE KILLED!

BRUCE -- DO SOMETHING!

AND BRUCE WAYNE -- REACTING INSTINCTIVELY -- DOES SOMETHING!...

BUT IN THAT SPLIT-SECOND OF THE RESCUE -- SOMETHING INEXPLICABLE HAS HAPPENED...

WHAT -- WHAT IS THIS?!?

EVERYTHING'S SUSPENDED -- EVERYONE'S STOPPED -- GONE RIGID -- FROZEN!

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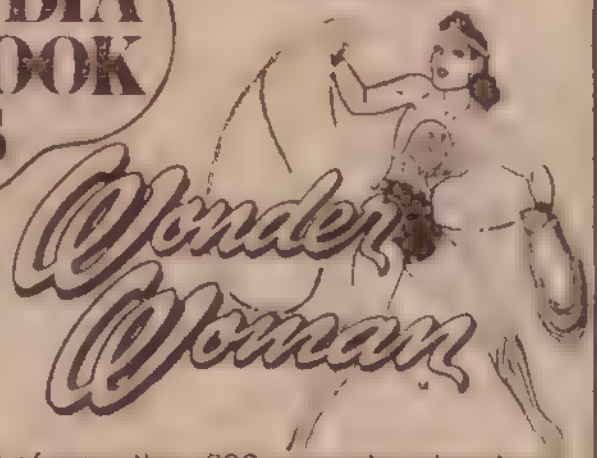

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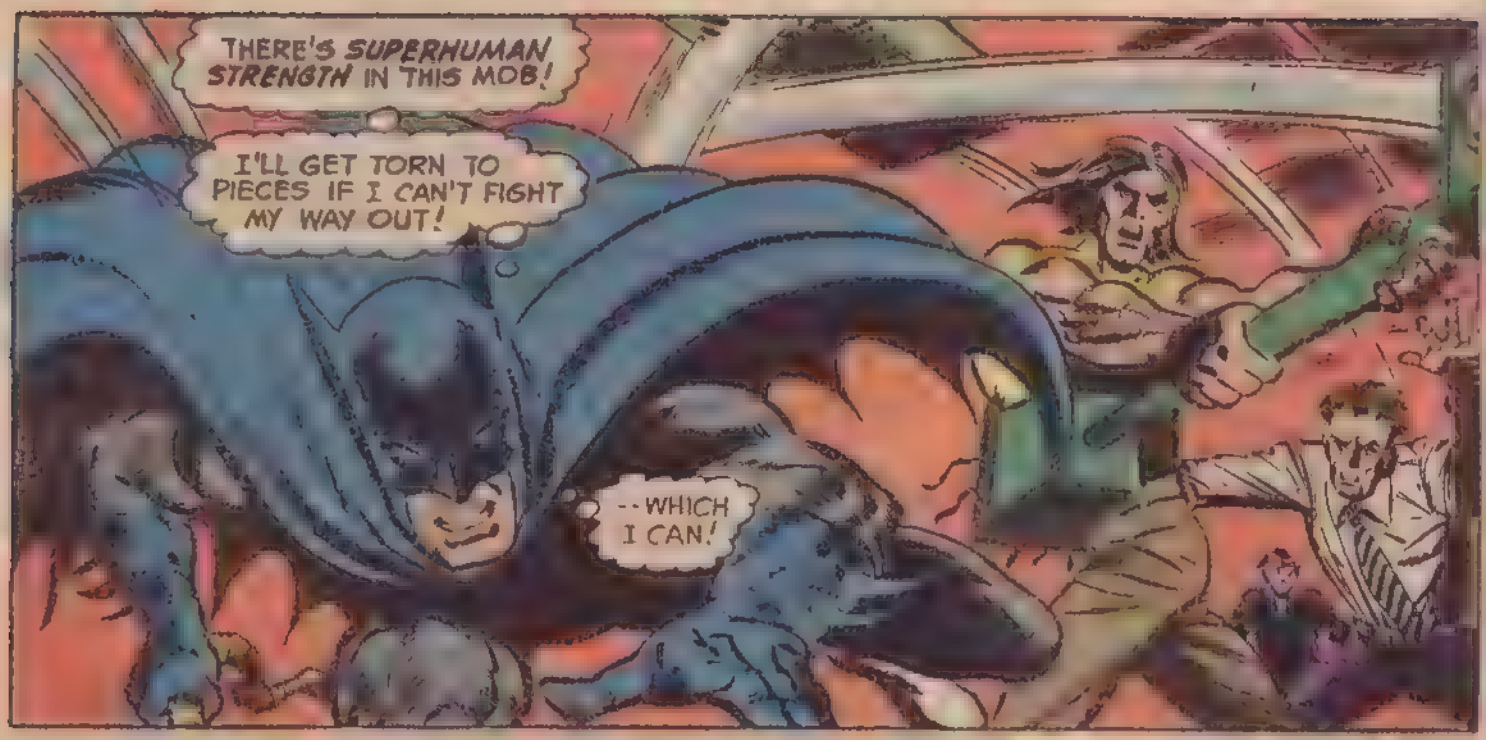
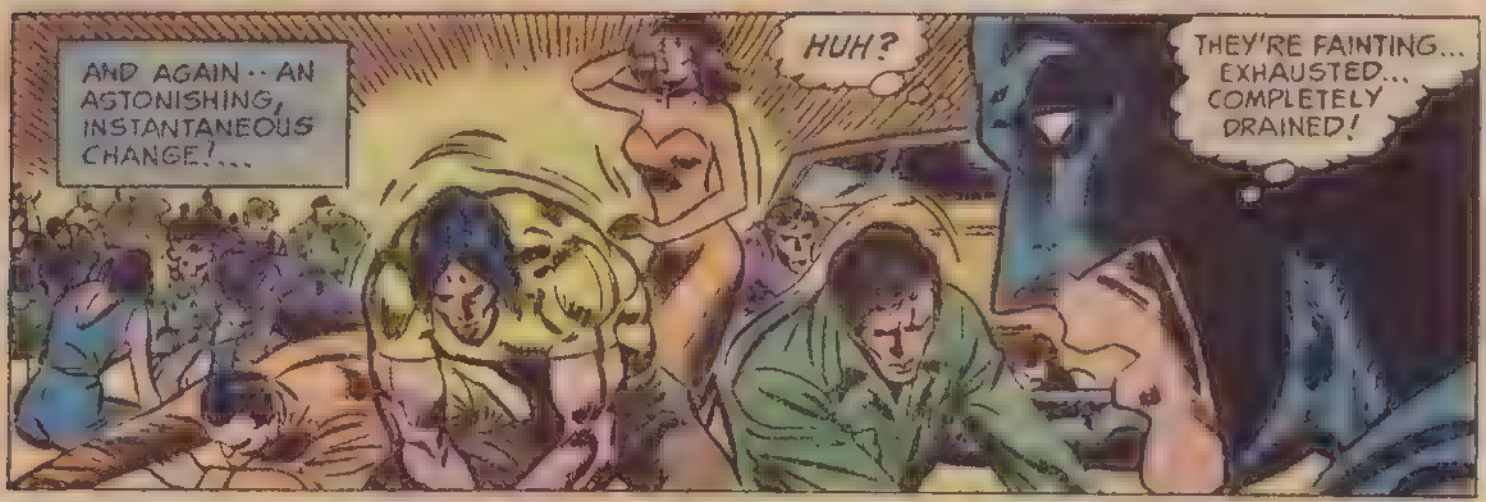
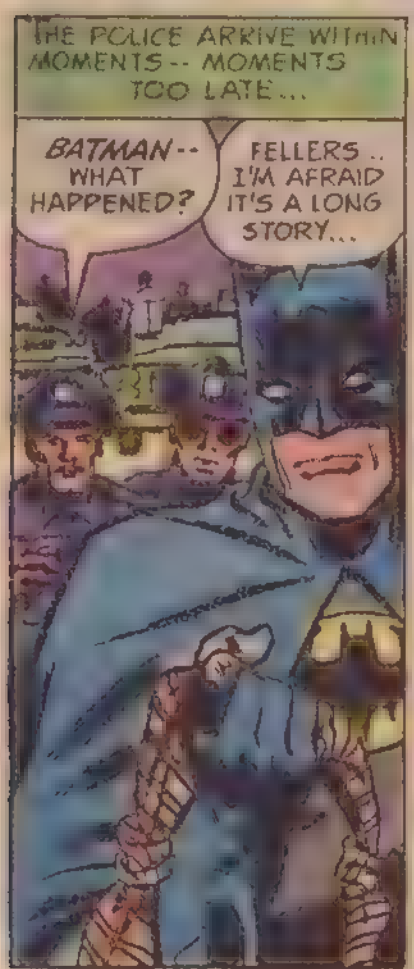
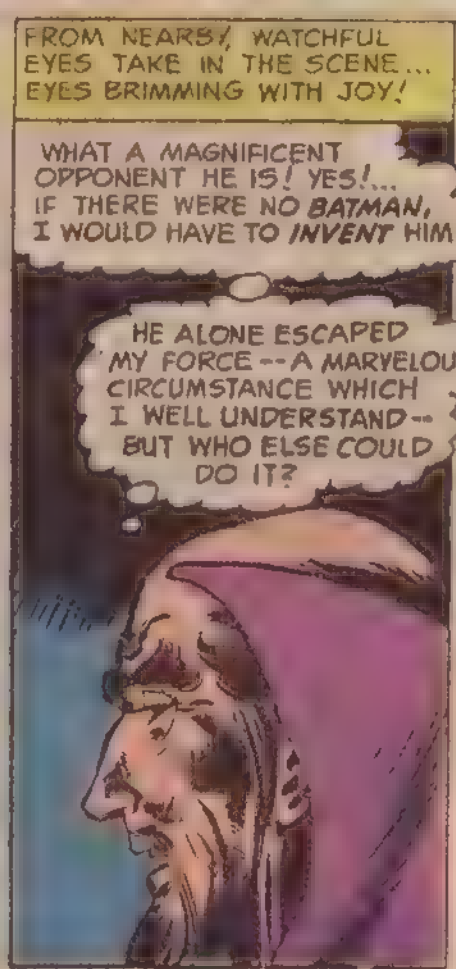
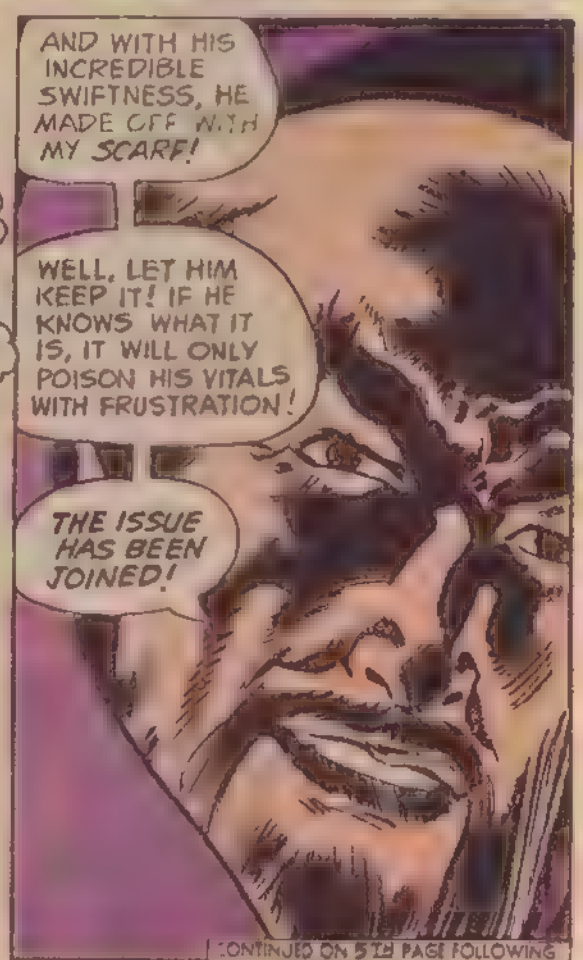
IT'S OVER... BUT EVERYONE'S STILL IN A TRANCE--CATALEPTIC--PARALYZED!
EXCEPT THERE--SOMEONE MOVING!
TRANSFERRING THE IMMOBILIZED CHILD TO IMMOBILIZED ARMS--THE BATMAN BOLTS INTO ACTION!...
EVEN IF THESE PEOPLE SEE ME--THEY DON'T REALLY SEE ME!
GOT HIM!
THEN--ALL AT ONCE--THE CROWD COMES SUDDENLY, VIOLENTLY ALIVE!...
THEY'RE ATTACKING ME--AS IF BEING DIRECTED TO STOP ME FROM CATCHING MY QUARRY!


THERE'S SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH IN THIS MOB!
I'LL GET TORN TO PIECES IF I CAN'T FIGHT MY WAY OUT!
--WHICH I CAN!


AND AGAIN -- AN ASTONISHING, INSTANTANEOUS CHANGE!...
HUH?
THEY'RE FAINTING... EXHAUSTED... COMPLETELY DRAINED!


THE POLICE ARRIVE WITHIN MOMENTS -- MOMENTS TOO LATE...
BATMAN -- WHAT HAPPENED?
FELLERS .. I'M AFRAID IT'S A LONG STORY...


FROM NEARBY, WATCHFUL EYES TAKE IN THE SCENE... EYES BRIMMING WITH JOY!
WHAT A MAGNIFICENT OPPONENT HE IS! YES!... IF THERE WERE NO BATMAN, I WOULD HAVE TO INVENT HIM!
HE ALONE ESCAPED MY FORCE -- A MARVELOUS CIRCUMSTANCE WHICH I WELL UNDERSTAND -- BUT WHO ELSE COULD DO IT?


AND WITH HIS INCREDIBLE SWIFTNESS, HE MADE OFF WITH MY SCARF!
WELL, LET HIM KEEP IT! IF HE KNOWS WHAT IT IS, IT WILL ONLY POISON HIS VITALS WITH FRUSTRATION!
THE ISSUE HAS BEEN JOINED!
CONTINUED ON 5TH PAGE FOLLOWING

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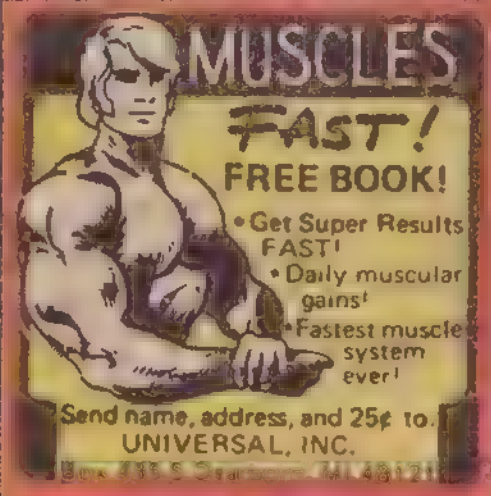

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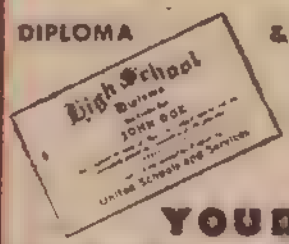

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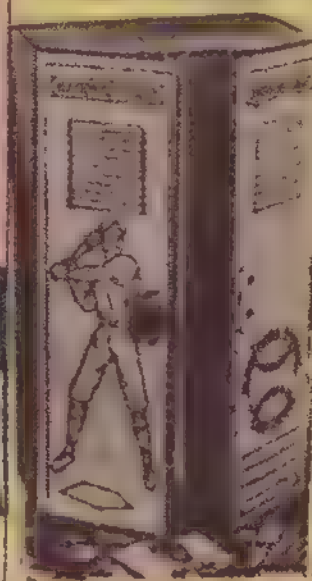

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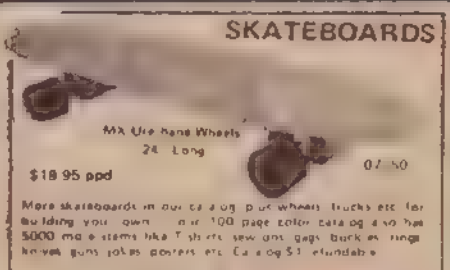

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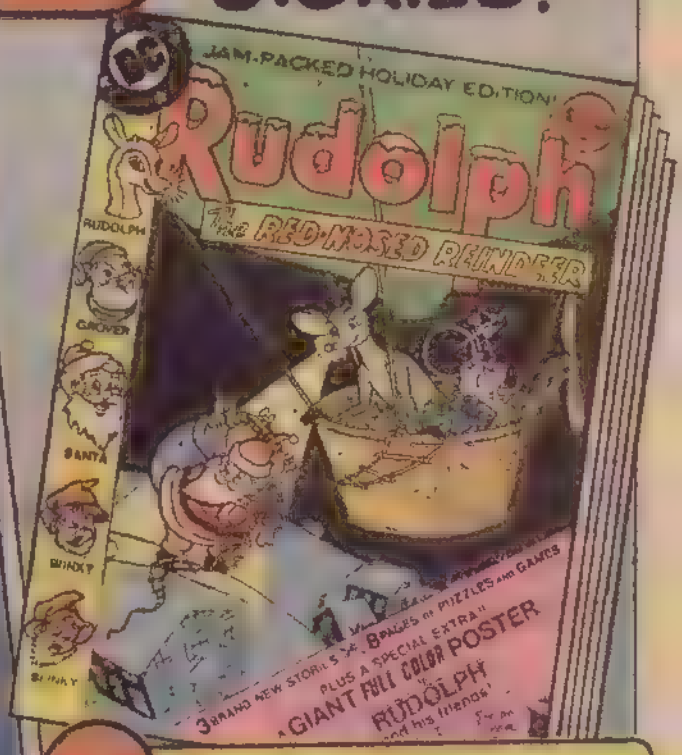

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IN FACT, YOU HAVE 365 DATES WHEN YOU GET THE NEW

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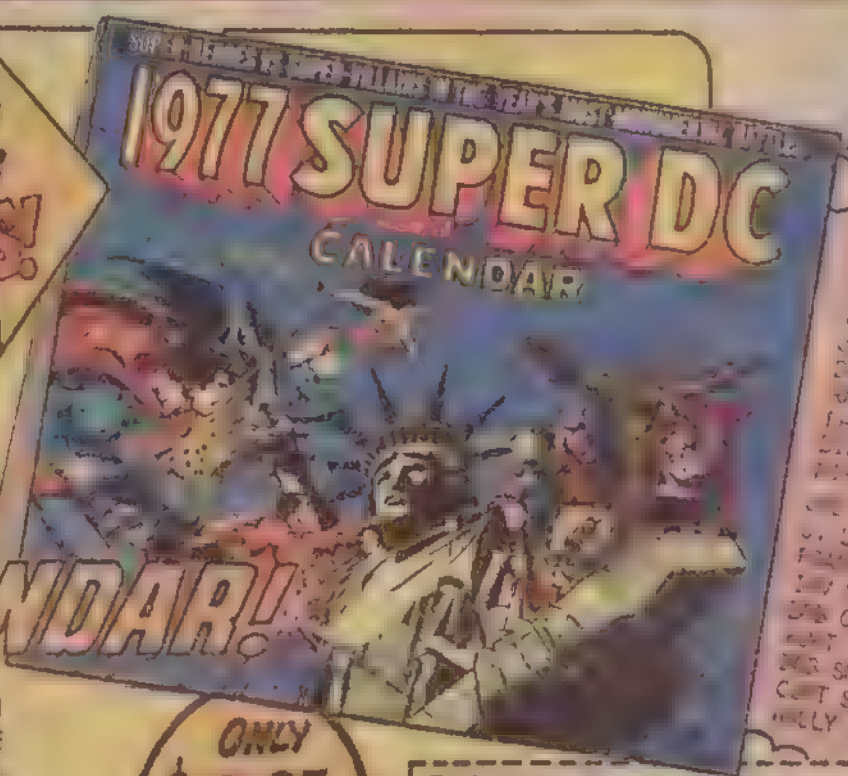

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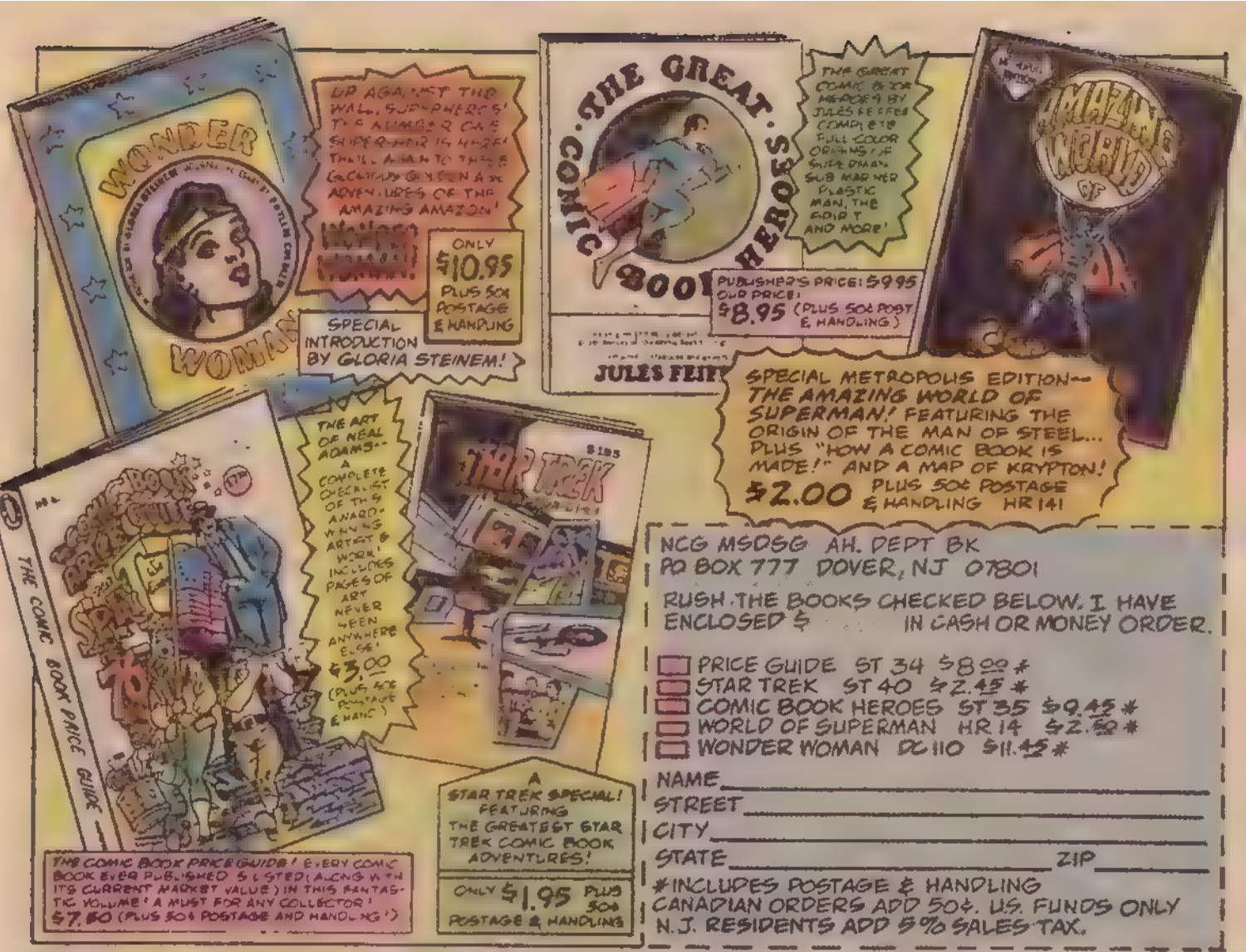
AND NOW -- FOR THE BATMAN -- THE ISSUE HAS INDEED BEEN JOINED -- BUT WITH CHIEF INSPECTOR MADDOX!
WHY IS IT NOBODY CAN MAKE SENSE? WILD STORIES ABOUT FLYING HORSES... PEOPLE SWINGING TRAFFIC LIGHTS!
SOME SWEAR THEY SAW IT -- OTHERS SAW NOTHING!
ALL I KNOW IS THERE WAS A TERRIFIC RUCKUS HERE... AND YOU, BATMAN, WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF IT -- IF NOT THE CAUSE OF IT!
WELL, BATMAN -- WHAT WAS IT -- HALLUCINATION -- ILLUSION --?
YOU MUST BE THINKING SOMETHING AND I DEMAND TO KNOW WHAT IT IS!
VERY WELL, INSPECTOR... IT WAS TIBETAN MAGIC!
THAT'S WHAT DR. TZIN-TZIN USED!
TIBETAN... MAGIC? WHAT'S THAT?
AND WHO IS DR. TZIN-TZIN?
HIS ORIGINS ARE UNKNOWN. SUPPOSEDLY, HE'S REALLY AN AMERICAN ORPHAN, FOUND AND RAISED BY CHINESE BANDITS...
...WHO LATER SPENT YEARS IN TIBET STEEPING HIMSELF IN THEIR MYSTICAL TEACHINGS.
UH-HUH... AND WHAT HOCUS-POCUS DID HE DO HERE?
FIRST, HE RADIATED HIS OWN PSYCHIC ENERGY... TO PRODUCE INSENTIENCE ALL AROUND HIM, IN EVERYONE.
THEN HE GAVE THEM WHAT IS CALLED... LIVING-SEED FORCE.
NEXT, HE CREATED ASTOUNDING MOVEMENT EVENTS... WHICH MULTIPLIED THE SEED MANY TIMES.
FINALLY, HE EXPLODED THAT FORCE -- AND AT ITS MOST VIOLENT POINT, HE STOLE BACK AND REABSORBED THAT VAST STORE OF ENERGY.

UH-HUH... TO DO WHAT? ROBBERY--? MURDER--?
NOTHING SO MUNDANE. BUT THERE'S NO DOUBT HE'LL USE IT--TO CREATE HAVOC--TO UNDERMINE ALL BELIEF IN REASON AND LOGIC--
--AND TO CHALLENGE ME!
DO YOU SERIOUSLY, HONESTLY BELIEVE ANY PART OF WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
YOU--THE SO-CALLED GREATEST SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVE IN THE WORLD?
WELL, SIR, YOU ASKED ME--AND I TOLD YOU!
WITHIN AN HOUR... AT THE BATCAVE--UNDER WAYNE MANOR... THE CRIMEFIGHTER PORES THROUGH HIS ESOTERIC VOLUMES ON ANCIENT TIBETAN LORE.
...WHILE ALFRED LABORS AND PONDERS...
IF I MAY SAY SO, SIR, THERE ARE STILL SEVERAL THINGS I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
SUCH AS...
WHERE DID DR. TZIN-TZIN GET THE POWER TO PUT EVERYONE IN THAT TRANCE?
FROM A SURPASSING FACULTY FOR CONCENTRATION, WHICH GENERATES CURRENTS OF FORCE OR ENERGY CALLED TSAL...
...WHICH CAN CHARGE--AND THEN CONTROL--ALMOST ANYTHING, ALIVE OR INANIMATE!
WHY WEREN'T YOU AFFECTED?
SHEER LUCK! AT THAT INSTANT, I WAS LEAPING TOWARD THE CHILD--WITH MY OWN PSYCHIC ENERGY SO HEIGHTENED, IT BLOCKED OFF EVERYTHING ELSE ...AT LEAST, ACCORDING TO TIBETAN DOGMA!
YOU DON'T REALLY BELIEVE THAT?
BELIEF IS UNNECESSARY, ALFRED! THINGS WORK OR THEY DON'T! DOES ELECTRICITY DEPEND ON YOUR BELIEF IN IT?
THE MORE ILLUSION THERE IS TO WHAT TZIN-TZIN DOES, THE MORE DANGEROUS IT IS! IMAGINATION IS THE MOST POTENT KILLER OF ALL!
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING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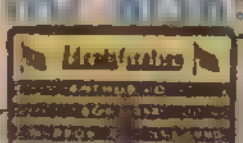

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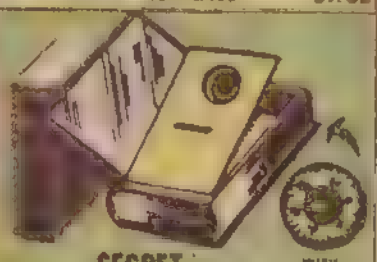

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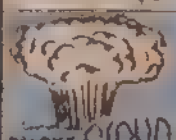

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Ordinary looking cake of soap until victim washes with it. Then big face turns brother and sister shocking! Harmless. A great trick.

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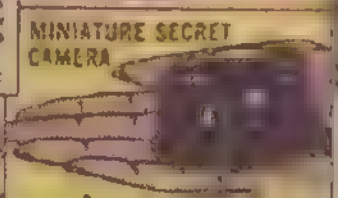

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Results in just 30 days

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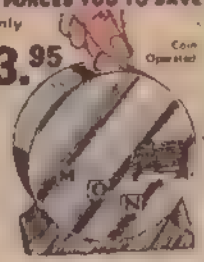
only $3.95



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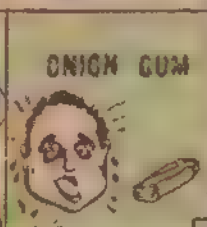

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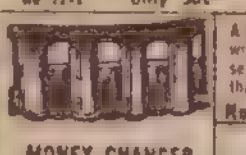

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TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED

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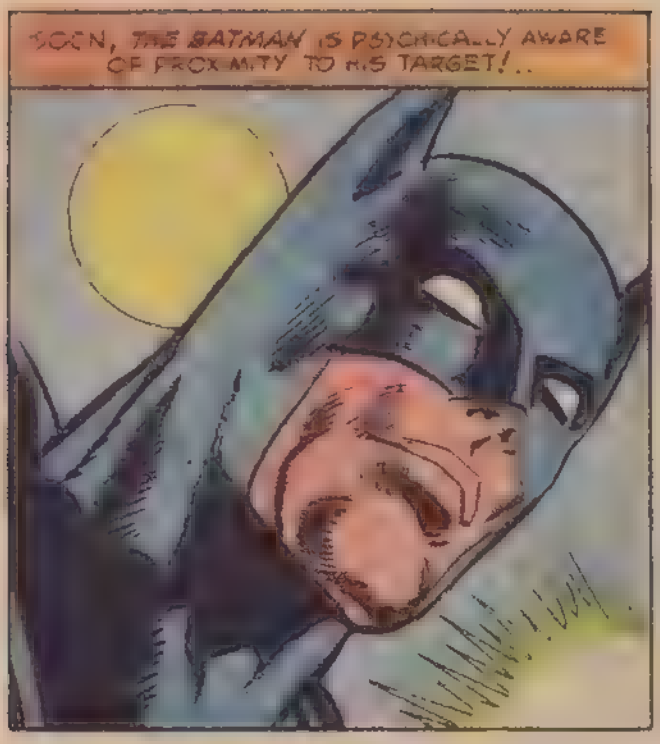
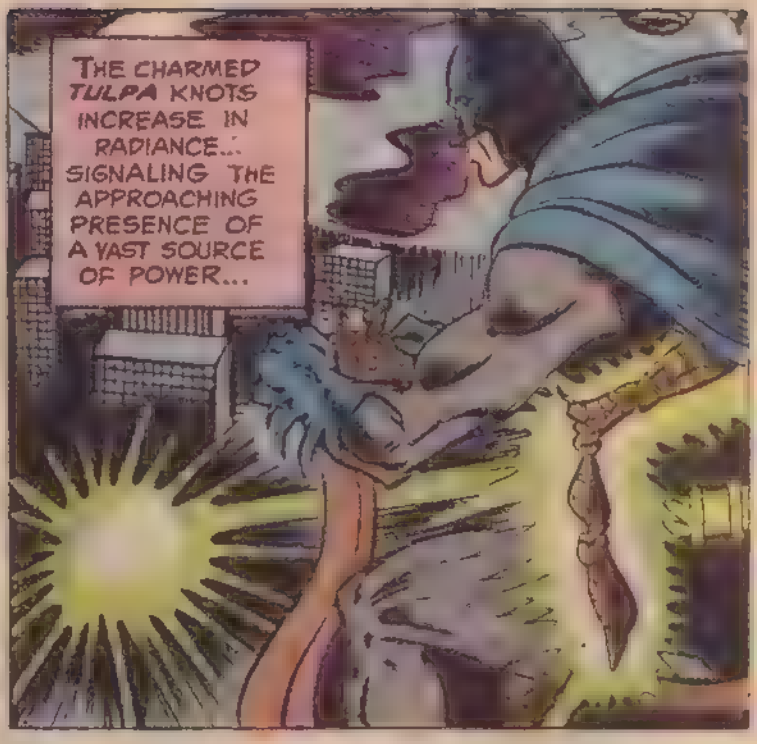
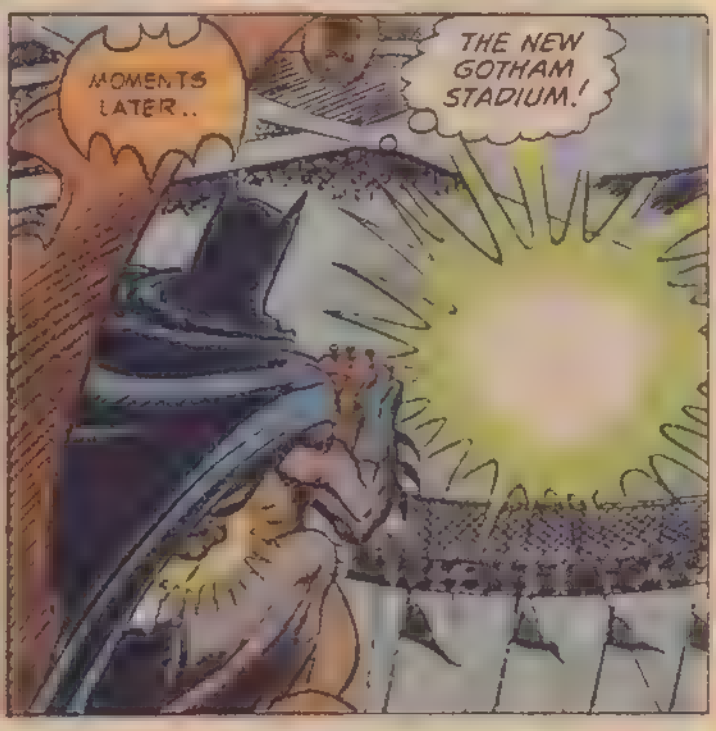
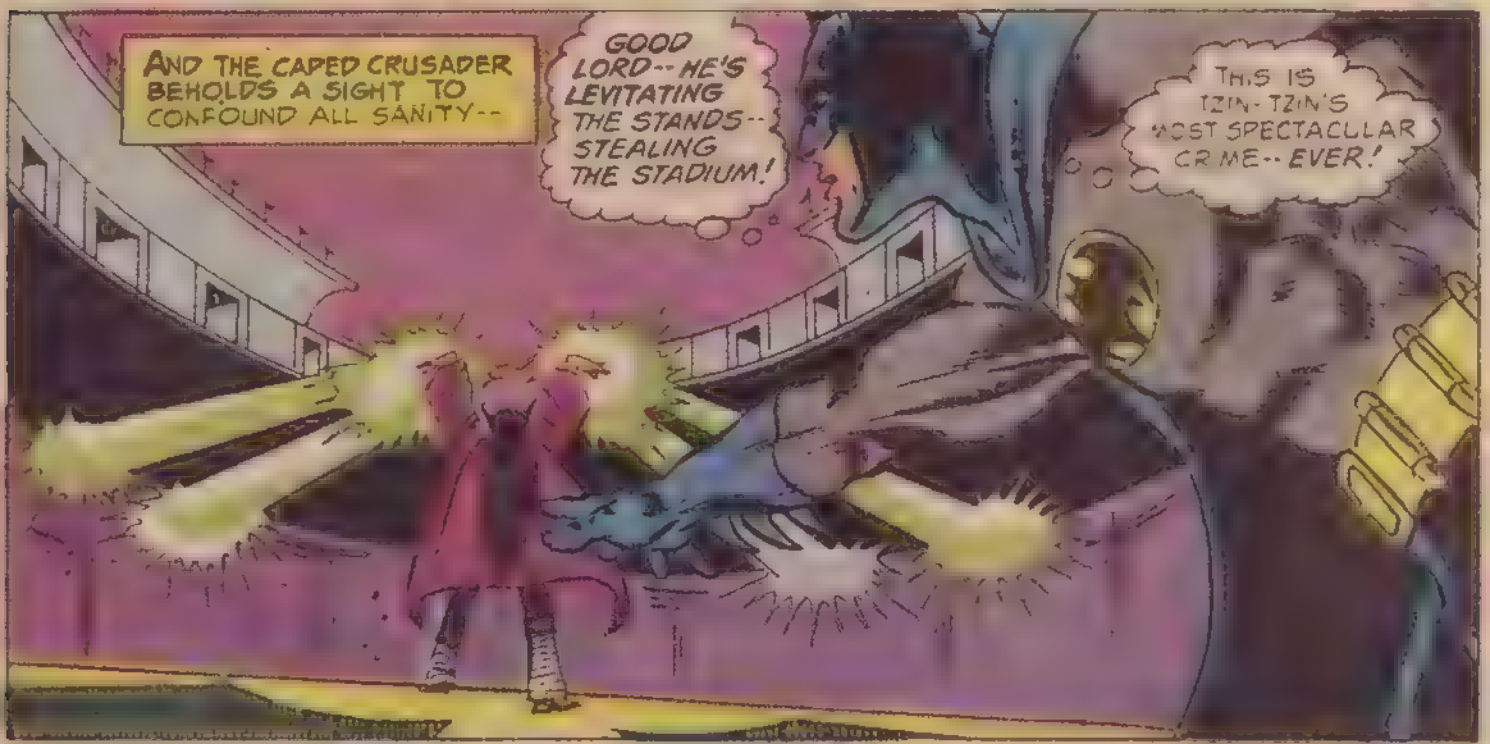
IT CAN BE USED IN THE RITES OF ANGKUR FOR EMPOWERMENT... OR, AS I INTEND...
...IN THE MYSTIC DOCTRINE OF THE "SHORT PATH"... WHERE I WILL ATTEMPT TO EMPTY MY MIND AND CEASE TO PRODUCE ALL ENERGY!
THEN, USING THIS -- THE SCARF OF DR. TZIN-TZIN -- WITH ITS CHARMED TULPA KNOTS...
...I HOPE TO BECOME SENSITIVE ENOUGH TO BE ATTRACTED TO ITS ORIGINAL SOURCE OF TSAL -- DR. TZIN-TZIN HIMSELF!
YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN I COME OUT, ALFRED. NOW, GET THE WHIRLYBAT AND BE READY FOR ME!
AN HOUR PASSES... NOT A SOUND IS HEARD AS A GREAT HUSH FALLS OVER EVEN THE SMALLEST OF NOCTURNAL CREATURES...
THEN -- THE BATMAN EMERGES -- HIS EYES UNSEEING... HIS GAIT HALTING -- GUIDED BY ALFRED TO THE WAITING WHIRLYBAT...
THERE, A COMBINATION OF CAREFULLY PREPARED SUBCONSCIOUS DIRECTION -- AND REFLEXES, CAREFULLY TRAINED AND NURTURED -- TAKE OVER.
AND IN MINUTES, THE MASKED MANHUNTER IS SLOWLY CIRCLING HIGH ABOVE THE NIGHTBOUND CITY --


SOON, THE BATMAN IS PSYCHICALLY AWARE OF PROXIMITY TO HIS TARGET!..


THE CHARMED TULPA KNOTS INCREASE IN RADIANCE.. SIGNALING THE APPROACHING PRESENCE OF A VAST SOURCE OF POWER...

UNTIL, LIKE PLANETS IRRESISTIBLY DRAWN INTO THE SUN, THEY ARE CONSUMED AS THEY MAKE CONJUNCTION WITH THAT POWER!
I CAN SEE AGAIN!-- WHERE AM I?
UPPER GOTHAM-- JUST SHORT OF THE NORTH RIVER!


MOMENTS LATER..
THE NEW GOTHAM STADIUM!


AND THE CAPED CRUSADER BEHOLDS A SIGHT TO CONFOUND ALL SANITY--
GOOD LORD-- HE'S LEVITATING THE STANDS-- STEALING THE STADIUM!
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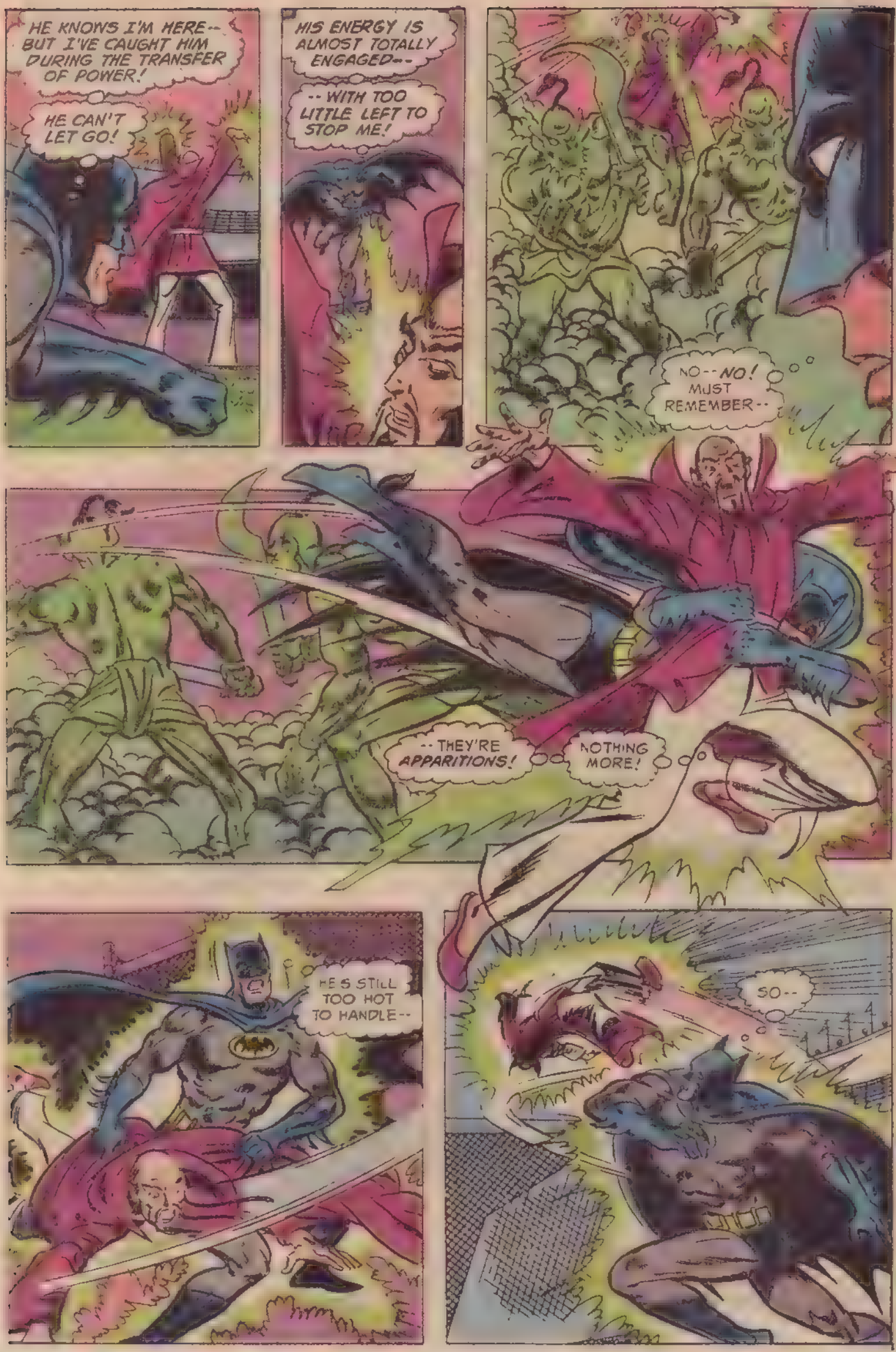
HE KNOWS I'M HERE-- BUT I'VE CAUGHT HIM DURING THE TRANSFER OF POWER!
HE CAN'T LET GO!
HIS ENERGY IS ALMOST TOTALLY ENGAGED--
-- WITH TOO LITTLE LEFT TO STOP ME!
NO--NO! MUST REMEMBER--
-- THEY'RE APPARITIONS!
NOTHING MORE!
HE'S STILL TOO HOT TO HANDLE--
SO--

HE'S LOST CONTROL!-- EXPENDING HIS POWER IN EVERY DIRECTION--
-- WASTING IT!
BUT WHAT AN AWESOME SIGHT IT MAKES!
ALL HE NEEDS IS ONE SPLIT SECOND TO REGAIN HIS SENSES!
--BUT HE'S NOT GOING TO GET IT!
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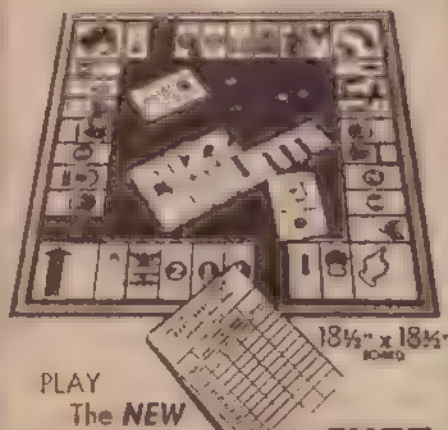

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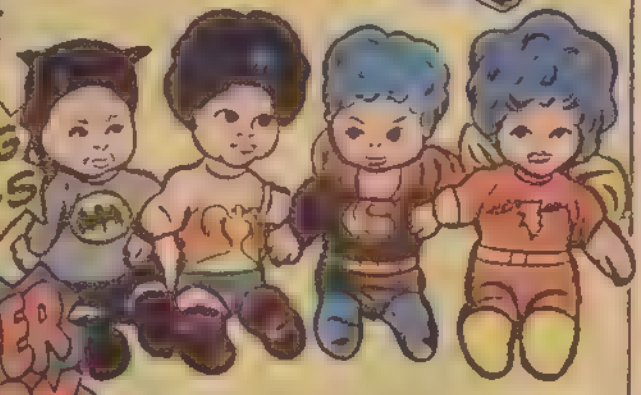

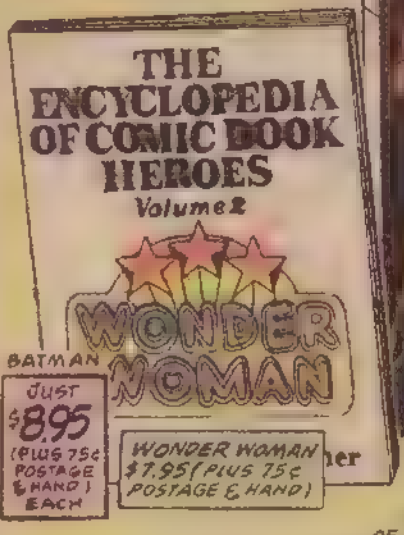

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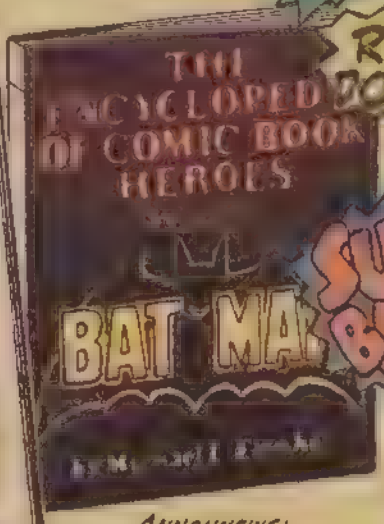

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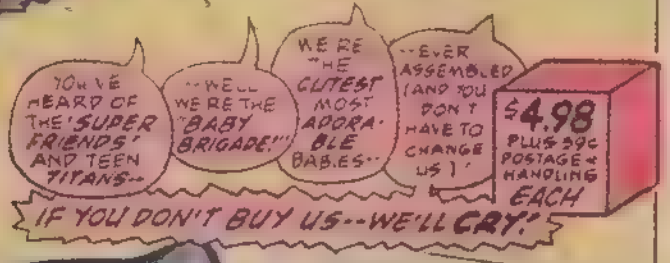
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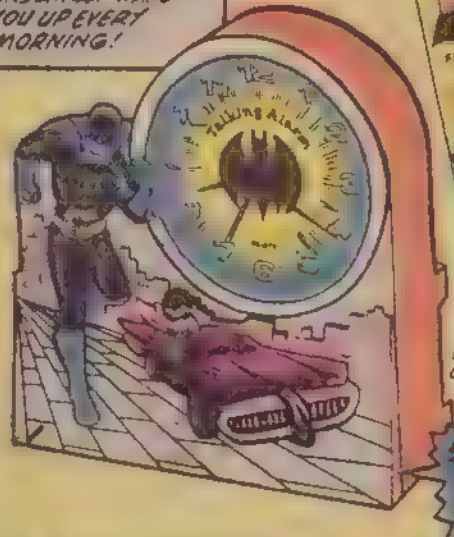

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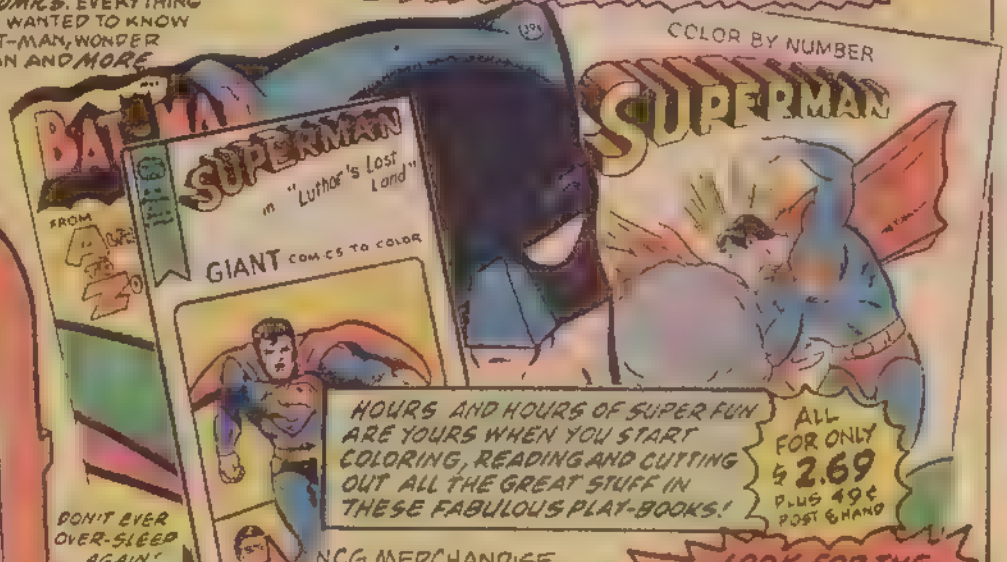

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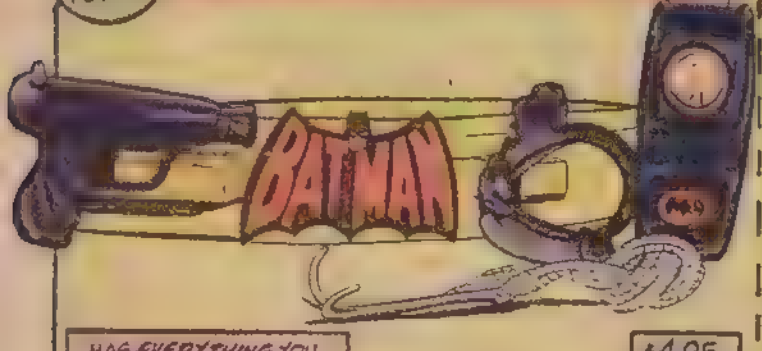

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--NO ONE BUT CHIEF INSPECTOR MADDOX...
...AND AS YOU SEE, SIR, THE STADIUM S STILL TEN FEET UP IN THE AIR!
IT'S SETTLING AS IT LOSES ENERGY, AND SHOULD BE COMPLETELY RESTORED IN A FEW MINUTES!
UNTIL THEN, I THOUGHT IT WISER TO KEEP THIS BETWEEN US!
NO POSSIBLE GOOD CAN COME FROM LETTING A STORY LIKE THIS CIRCULATE IN GOTHAM!
YES..YES, OF COURSE! YOU DID THE RIGHT THING!
AND WHERE IS THIS DR. TZIN-TZIN NOW?
HERE--GIFT-WRAPPED IN THE PROTECTIVE NETTING BEHIND HOME PLATE!
NOW, REMEMBER, WHAT I TOLD YOU ABOUT HANDLING THE DOCTOR--ESPECIALLY THAT HE MUST BE KEPT IN SOLITARY!
IF HE GETS A CHANCE TO BOUNCE HIS TSAL OFF ENOUGH PEOPLE-- LOOK OUT!
LOOK OUT?... OH... LOOK OUT... YES...
INSPECTOR, DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME? YOU SEEM CONFUSED!
YES... AHEM... PERHAPS I AM! BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF STAYING CONFUSED! I'M GOING TO GET ME SOME BOOKS ON TIBET!
WELL, IF HE THINKS HE'S CONFUSED NOW, WAIT TILL HE STARTS READING THOSE BOOKS!
SOMETHING TELLS ME WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF DR. TZIN-TZIN-- AND WHEN SOMETHING TELLS ME, IT'S USUALLY RIGHT!
RECONCILE YOURSELF, BATMAN-- WHATEVER THAT "SOMETHING" IS-- IT'S RIGHT AGAIN! AND SOMETHING ELSE IS WAITING FOR YOU IN THE NEXT ISSUE--
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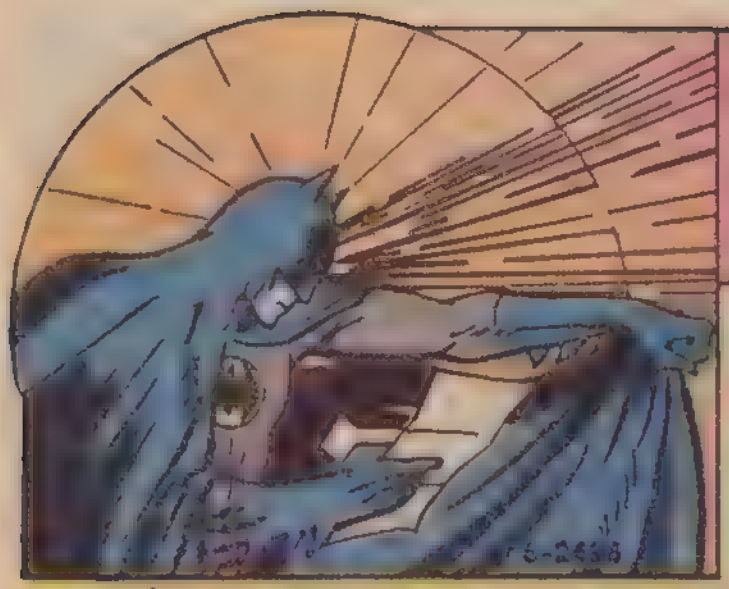

LETTERS to the BATMAN

c/o NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.,
75 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019.

Dear Editor,

Batman #280 is an example of **David V. Reed** at his best. It sets out the pattern followed in all his stories, but this time, everything works! We start off with the "gimmick"—some bizarre occurrence the meaning of which **Batman** must unravel. Many of these stories stand or fall on whether Dave can provide an explanation sufficient to justify the "gimmick". This time Reed is successful, although I am with the feeling that there must have been an easier way for Fletcher and Goodwin to pull off "The Only Crime in Town!"

Next we see **The Batman** swing into action and break open the case. Here, Reed slights the "creature of the night" aspect which other writers have emphasized, but he more than makes up for it with his masterful presentation of **Batman** the detective. We see him combine observation and deduction in a plausible fashion to solve the most unsolvable mysteries. Indeed, **Batman** comes across as a real professional who works logically from the facts and not a magician who pulls solutions out of his hat.

And there is Bruce Wayne. Where other writers often ignore this aspect of the character, David V. Reed fits him effectively into the story. He shows us clearly that **The Batman** is but one aspect of Bruce Wayne and how the r different personalities fit together to form a totality.

Dave's action scenes are something of a letdown, however. The problem is that **Batman** never meets a serious challenge. There is almost a ho-hum quality about the way he lays out numerous crooks with the greatest of ease. And it seems that poor Commissioner Gordon exists only to listen to **Batman's** explanations of it all. Doesn't he get tired of it?

However, despite these relatively minor faults and the formula approach he takes to the stories, David V. Reed writes tales that are good and occasionally far more than just good. His gimmicks can be tiring and yet they appeal to the element of the macabre that is central to the appeal to **The Batman**. The Caped Crusader himself is handled with an understanding for the character and a skill that makes him interesting to watch even if the plot flops. Dave has returned the World's Greatest Detective and for that we must all thank him.

RICK PETERSON
2533 Hillegass #305
Berkeley, CA 94704

(Dave's Batman tales are so interesting and exciting that even we editorial types—including editor Julie—look forward to each new script to see what Mr. Reed has cooked up!—BR)

. . . . .

Dear Editor:

"The Only Crime in Town" in **BATMAN #280** was the only comic in town to really hold my interest for a good amount of time. There are masterpieces of the written mystery novels and BATMAN #280 was a masterpiece of the comic book mystery tale. David V. Reed has done it again!

Why is there a halt in organized crime between two marks of a clock, to the point where criminals committing a crime willingly surrender rather than violate the curfew? It is an involved puzzle and it takes all the skills of **The Batman** to figure it out. And the twist and double twist of the solution befit the maestro well, of course it would be the victims themselves!

All through the story, one can practically hear **The Batman's** mind racing the subtle movements of a finely tuned clock, taking out each piece of the puzzle, shaking it and judging with quick and easy precision where it belongs in the puzzle. "The Only Crime in Town" echoes something; it echoes the workings of The Batman's gears, the mainspring which keeps him going!

David V. Reed is an artist in his own way, just as a watchmaker is. **Watch for him in future issues!**

ELIZABETH M. SMITH
13224 S.C.
Tacoma, WA 98444

(Watch for Dave as he and Batman tackle The Penguin in BATMAN #286!—BR)

Dear Editor: . . . . . .

I'm surprised. It was one of the best things my eyes have seen in some time. I'm astonished, awe-struck and amazed. No, not with Dave Reed's script in **BATMAN #280.** What impressed me most was instead the excellent art by Ernie Chua and Frank Giacoia. Chua's free-flowing style took on more form and shape. Facial expressions especially benefited from this collaboration. When **Batman** was in battle, you could see the fury in his face. And for once, **Batman** didn't look muscle-bound—just plain powerful.

As for the script, the whole idea was rather silly. Does Dave expect me to believe that the killing of one criminal is going to halt all crime in Gotham for one hour? I can't picture a gang leader taking any amount of money for the purpose of stopping crime. I'm no expert, but I think the head honcho would take the money and ignore the curfew just the same. That way he'd make more money!

By the way, I must come to Dave's defense in one instance. One reader accuses Dave of sending **Batman** to "camp." Hardly! **Batman** spouts an occasional witticism, but why must it instantly be considered campy? I'm glad Dave inserts these lines into his scripts because they make the story more interesting. Heck, if I had to do half the stuff **Batman** does, I'd be tempted to hire a comedy writer just to lift the gloom!

MIKE WHITE
Mackinaw, IL

(You'll be seeing a wider variety of Bat-artists in the future as evidenced in this issue and in DETECTIVE 467—with John Calnan and Vince Colletta—and 468—Marshall Rogers and Terry Austin!—Bob Rozakis)

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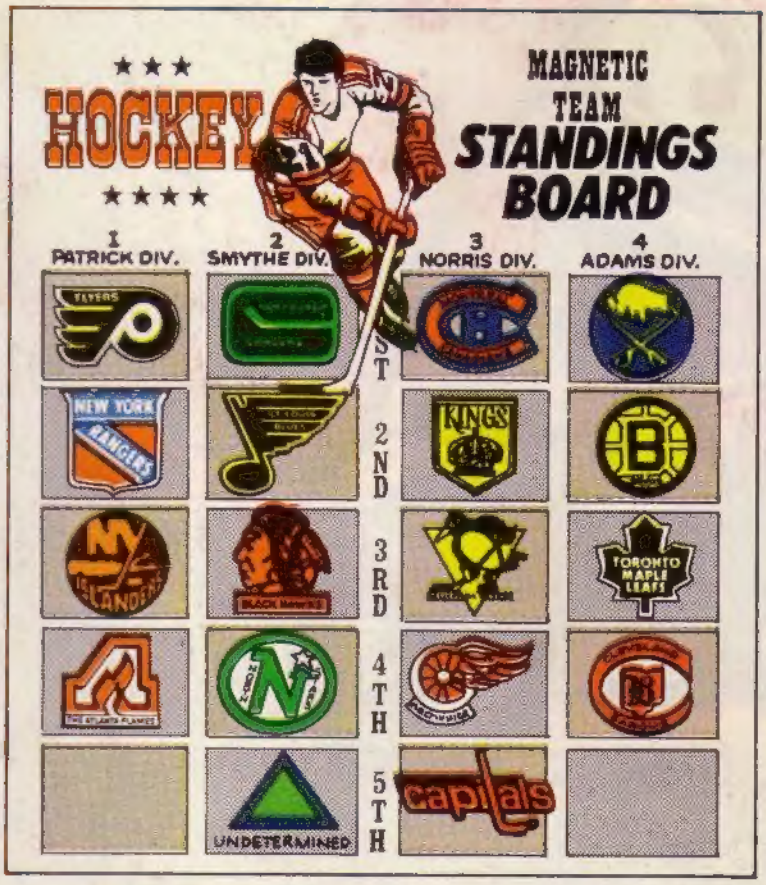

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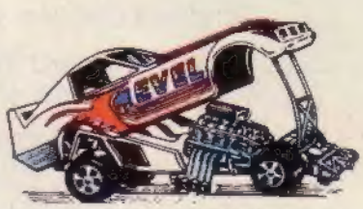

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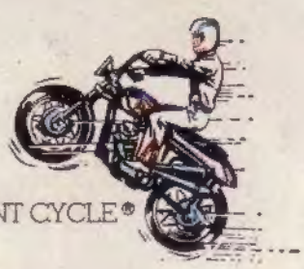

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